



# The Corps Engages: Military Infrastructure


**B**EGINNING in 1951 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers carried out U.S. government-sponsored construction projects in the Middle East. In the mid-1960s Saudi Arabia asked USACE to assist in the construction of the Saudi military infrastructure, all of which the Saudis funded.

In 1976 the USACE Middle East Division was formed to oversee the by-then extensive construction program.

Under an engineer assistance agreement and a subsequent memorandum of understanding between USACE and the Saudi Ministry of Defense and Aviation, the division helped MODA build three large bases. USACE also built the MODA headquarters, the Royal Saudi Air Force headquarters, a military academy, an airborne training school, housing, airfields, ports, hospitals, schools, roads and an engineer-training center.

The jewel of the entire Saudi program was the construction of King Khalid Military City, a massive base designed to house more than 70,000 people. The KKMC project cost \$8.5 billion. This was the single largest military construction project in USACE history and required the award of more than 30 large contracts.

Besides the Saudi projects, USACE also oversaw work in Oman, Qatar, Egypt, Jordan and Somalia during this period.

From 1976 through 1988 the USACE Middle East projects were collectively worth an estimated \$14 billion, and required some 3000 USACE employees to rotate through Saudi Arabia. 



The entrance to KKMC, one of several USACE projects in Saudi Arabia.



Designed to house 70,000 people, KKMC cost \$8.5 billion to build.